

## STATE OF THE LIBRARY

September 3, 2002

Good morning. And thank you all for joining me as I celebrate my third anniversary in the Library. I continue to think it's important for us to take this annual opportunity to look at how things have gone over the last year and to see what's ahead in the years to come.

It sure wasn't the best of years and I don't think it was the worst of years either. But last year could hold claim to being the busiest of years. It was a time of challenge - some triumphs (one of which, our Voyager implementation, we're celebrating this morning), some things we could have done better, some areas in which to concentrate in the coming year.

Just eight days from now we'll mark the anniversary of one of the worst tragedies our country has known. On that beautiful clear late summer morning here in Central Illinois we learned of the horrific attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and that day and for many days beyond we learned, too, of the heroism and compassion of our fellow citizens. The passengers who foiled the fourth plane's mission; the rescue workers at Ground Zero; those who opened their hearts and wallets to help the survivors and those who loved ones lost their lives on that terrible day. Here in Champaign-Urbana you all gave so generously to help those who suffered directly, and we were comforted by the many notes of kindness and sympathy we received from our friends and colleagues around the world.

We were a true community, within the Library, the University, and the country. It shouldn't take another tragedy for us to retain and strengthen those communities in the coming years.

Last year we were more directly marked by death when Phyllis Danner died after a valiant fight against a brain tumor. I know that many of you lost loved ones last year, too. Let's observe a moment of silence in memory of all of them.

I rarely make promises, but last year I made you one - that we'd have a coffee service outside the Undergraduate Library by this time. And so we do, no thanks to anything I did, I should add. I think I won't go out on such a precarious limb again this year, although it's probably safe to promise that there will be visible evidence of our Oak Street facility by this time next year - hopefully we'll be moving materials in and staff will be settling into their new service and conservation lab quarters. Last year I also urged everyone to take time off to reflect, have fun, or simply "veg out." Is there anyone here today who was here at this time last year who hasn't taken some time off? (if so, playful scold)

I have in each of my previous State of the Library talks articulated a rather formal vision for the Library. Although I won't repeat it again, I do want to remind you that our vision features high quality service, collections, and facilities for our users, unquestioned leadership in the U.S. and around the world, and a high quality caring environment in which to work.

So, let's take a look first at how much progress we made in fulfilling our vision and then let's look at what's ahead for us collectively.

We had many notable accomplishments. Because of our limited time, I'm only going to highlight a few; all that you reported will soon be posted on the web.

I would be remiss if I didn't list first the many wonderful new people we've hired this year. We said farewell to some old friends who have ended their time with us and we welcomed the many new people who have joined us. I hope you new employees find this to be as gratifying and rewarding a place to work as I do. Know that many of your colleagues worked really hard to identify and lure you to be with us, and that we're very glad you're here and hope you'll stay with us a long time.

Today we're celebrating our new library system. Nearly all of you have been involved in implementing the Voyager system in one way or another, and it certainly has been a major achievement. The new software supports all library functions, but the most visible benefit to our patrons is the new catalog, which is fully web-based, more flexible to navigate, offers much more powerful search options, and is fully integrated. Had we acquired the system ourselves, its smooth implementation would have been notable. That we were able to work within the very complex ILCSSO environment so successfully is more than notable; it's an extraordinary achievement and you should all feel proud. I certainly do.

Our collective determination to implement a comprehensive preservation program has at last begun to be realized. We've hired an administrator, a conservation librarian, and a brittle books coordinator (who will join us later this year). And there's been lots of activity: there's a new preservation policy statement; the first deacidification project with the Rare Book and Special Collections Library was completed; we wrote a new binding contract; and program planning is underway. Of special note is the Mellon grant: \$300,000 for equipment for the new conservation lab that will be in our Oak Street facility and \$700,000 for an endowment for staff, for which we must raise \$1.4 million. So far, we have in hand more than a third of the money we need to raise in the next 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  years.

Planning for the Oak Street facility has been a challenging undertaking, but we're achieving good progress there, too. Who would have thought that it costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to move a power pole? Or that a message posted on a list serve in Pennsylvania would raise questions about fire suppression requirements, questions that delayed the project for quite a while until they could be resolved? But, we're moving ahead. The construction work will soon be out to bid, the process to select materials is underway, "faux Oak Street" is almost ready, we've developed stabilization procedures for materials being prepared for storage, and retrospective conversion for 50 serial titles destined for Oak Street has been completed. The big news is that ground-breaking will take place later this fall, with a projected 9-month construction period.

As usual, our libraries are among the busiest places on campus. We've made improvements in a few of our facilities, although my vision of renovated space throughout all our libraries remains distant. Hopefully, there'll be some significant progress as a result of our upcoming capital campaign. Our biggest facilities news, of course, was the new ACES Library. As predicted, users found it quickly. Now, we have to get cracking on finding money to upgrade our many other spaces. Not that we've done nothing else, of course.

Phase I of the Main library reconfiguration is well underway; the space Conservation currently occupies is complete, the basement hallways have been spiffed up, and Acquisitions is settled into its new space. The remodeled Newspaper Library space should be ready for occupancy later this fall. We added a new Welcome Desk in the Main Library and new public service computer tables in the Undergraduate Library, and we're going to continue along these lines as our budget allows. Remodeling requests have been submitted to O&M for the Staff Lounge and the Gifts Department space, both in the Main Library.

We also continued to improve the quality and array of our service offerings this year. The Access Task Force has provided a clear and cogent set of priorities and strategies to improve access to our collections and the Associate University Librarians now have those plans and priorities firmly in their portfolios. Thanks to a grant from the Illinois State Library we're going to be able to put a dent, albeit not so large, in the backlog of about 1.6 million records that need full conversion into our online database. Our user education program was coordinated by the Used Ed Committee, but has now

been taken over by our newly-appointed User Education Coordinator - another dream articulated repeatedly in our strategic plan that we've finally realized. Our newly revamped Gateway has vastly improved user access to the resources and services we provide, and new websites, such as the Medieval Studies site, provide new services and creative approaches to meeting needs expressed by new and newly-revitalized academic programs. We continued to listen to our users by beginning to circulate books from the Women and Gender Resources Library, developing the "Take Us With You" website for UIUCers who are traveling, extending e-reserves to several other libraries, and developing a new printing system.

But, how did we really do? We again participated in the nationally-administered LibQual+ program that defines and measures library service quality across institutions. Although our analysis is far from done, I was shown a comparison of the results of large public university research libraries that was done at Texas A&M. Among those that participated in the survey, UIUC came out at or near the top in every category. Some of these results make me question the survey (could we really score the best in facilities?) and further analysis reveals that all answers correlate strongly with size of collection. I think that's an extremely important finding, one that substantiates the importance of continuing to invest in building and preserving our collections. But it neither tells us nearly as much as we need to know about our services today nor helps us much in planning services for tomorrow and beyond. We'll be relying on our local advisory groups to help us with that.

Our collections grew again this year, at least to the extent our resources allowed. We're getting close to the 10 million volume mark. We acquired our first vernacular electronic database: *Magazine Plus*, a Japanese periodicals index, we began the "Own not Loan" program in IRRC through which we order and catalog books when it's faster than borrowing them - it provides better service and fills collection gaps -- and we received a number of important gifts, including a collection of negatives of aerial photographs valued at \$400,000, more than 1,200 books from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago, and NASA scientist and UIUC alumnus John C. Houbolt's papers. We also developed and refined a model for collection budget allocation, using recommendations made by the Library Allocation Steering Committee. The results still aren't perfect and we'll be continuing to refine the model next year.

Whenever I think of our collections, I'm reminded about what one of my predecessors, Robert Downs, said in *Books in My Life*: "My lifelong love affair with books and reading continues unaffected by automation, computers, and all other forms of twentieth-century gadgetry." Although we need no one to tell us that new twentieth- and twenty-first-century 'gadgetry' provides incredibly rich and improved access and use capabilities, we shouldn't forget that the printed word remains the lifeblood of information and knowledge communication, and pleasure. Balancing our investments in a wide variety of formats and access arrangements that meet the needs of all of our constituents is key to maintaining and building a collection as strong and special for the twenty-first century as it was in Robert Downs' era.

Having sufficient financial resources continues to be a major challenge. We've made good progress in laying the groundwork for the campus's capital campaign for the library; an internal campus steering committee has begun its work and Fred Guyton, an architect from St. Louis, has agreed to chair our external campaign committee. Information sheets for each library have been prepared, and Lyn Jones and I have met with the Foundation's regional gift officers to distribute information and ask for their help. Several have already arranged for us to travel with them to meet potential donors in their regions, and we expect these opportunities to continue throughout the campaign. Notable monetary gifts this year included two estate gifts that went towards the Mellon match and a \$250,000 gift from Donald and Marilyn Ainsworth. Of special note: the Library Friends Endowment fund surpassed the \$600,000 benchmark. And with great excitement I can tell you that the Foundation will be announcing a 7-figure gift to the Library at its annual Foundation Weekend later this month. I'm not permitted to 'scoop' the announcement, but it's to endow one of our positions (no, not mine!). So, stay tuned for more news when you can join me in publicly thanking these generous donors.

This year the Library has engaged with the campus in a number of interesting ways that are additional to the many interactions and relationships so many of you have with campus colleagues and programs. We prepared a proposal in response to the Chancellor's call for cross-campus initiatives; a grant from the Illinois Program in the Humanities to establish a reading group for Fall 2002 on "The Artifact in the Twenty-First Century"



will continue our work in this area. The appointment of our first Associate University Librarian for Information Technology Planning and Policy has led to a number of new collaborations with CITES (formerly CCSO and CET). The Chancellor's newly-appointed Cultural Engagement Council grew out of discussions that started last fall (the group was then known as the Public Goods Group). Comprised of the Library, Krannert Art Museum, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Japan House, Spurlock Museum, Allerton, WILL, and the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the Council is making progress towards improving its engagement with both the campus and surrounding communities.

Two ongoing advisory committees, the Senate Committee on the Library (SCL) and the University Librarian's Student Advisory Committee (ULSAC) continued to meet and give us good input throughout the year. And a third advisory committee, which promises to be very helpful, was established late in the year as an outgrowth of recommendations made by the former Library Allocation Steering Committee. Adding to our panoply of acronyms, the LRAC - Long-Range Advisory Committee - is charged to provide advice about the Library's long-term directions; it's comprised of senior faculty and chaired by Fred Troutt of the College of Veterinary Medicine. LRAC will engage in a visioning exercise that will look 15-20 years in the future this fall. Won't it be interesting to see how their visions match ours?

Last year we talked quite a bit about training and development opportunities. Although we didn't offer training sessions on some of the topics you suggested, it wasn't for lack of will. Rather, the numerous training sessions

required for III and Voyager seemed to satiate our need for more. But there will be more in the coming years, offered in a coherent and organized program. I continue to put support for training and development opportunities very high on my list of priorities; it's one of very few areas in which we haven't curtailed the budget this year. After all, we worked so hard to recruit you all, no matter how long ago or how recently, that investments in your continued learning and development are critically important, and they will remain so.

We've accomplished a lot, but we continue to face many imposing and important challenges. When I met with you all as a group for the first time - three years ago to the day - I told you that it's my responsibility to advocate vigorously for more funds for the Library. And that it's also my responsibility to explain why we didn't get as much as we thought we should have. I probably don't have to tell you that this is a very tough financial year for the University. The Library was protected; our budget was cut only 1.5% and we received \$350,000 for our collection budget. But, coupled with commitments for negotiated raises, Voyager implementation, Oak Street facility preparation, and our newly hired employees, as well as the need to identify 2% of our budget should we be asked to return money later this year (that's a University mandate), our budget is very very tight. I truly appreciate the many money-saving suggestions you've sent me, and we'll soon be issuing a list of which of those ideas will be adopted. Some, such as a 3-month delay in filling vacancies, have already been implemented.

Although our Budget Committee has done a good job of developing short-term strategies, with help from all of you who sent in your good suggestions, we're still not well enough positioned to deal with major reductions, or major windfalls for that matter.

Clearly we'd like to continue to do everything we've been doing - and more. And also, clearly, that's not possible. Unit heads have been asked to offer strategies for dealing with reduced budgets and I'll be reading their annual reports, in which this information will be conveyed, with great interest. I expect to see some of these strategies reflected in annual goals and budget requests as well. We'll all increasingly be asked to provide more analysis and rationale for how we've been using our resources and for how we plan to use them in the future. The Strategic Planning Committee will use this year to plan for a major revision of our strategic plan; this is part of its regular schedule to examine and recast our strategic priorities every five years, so please be alert to the Committee's request for your input.

But, we can't and won't stand still and we will continue to move ahead, in spite of our budget pressures. I think, in fact, that it's even more important to think creatively, entrepreneurially, and wisely during times of budget challenges than at times when resources are more abundant. Here are some important priorities that will help ensure a vibrant future:

We must integrate our newly hired employees into the Library. Ours is an environment that's quite different from many other libraries. Those of us who are here have the responsibility to help our new hires - at all levels --

understand how we work and why (and you might also clue me in on some of the more arcane practices and behaviors I sometimes observe!). We're also responsible for mentoring them, listening to their questions and suggestions carefully, and basically demonstrating the care with which we would like to be welcomed. "Because we've always done it that way" is not an acceptable answer to a question from any employee - or library user. These are times that call for new thinking and new perspectives, and we welcome those from everyone, old-timers and newbies alike.

Building our collections continues to be a tough challenge. Clearly we don't have enough money to continue to make this collection what we know it should be, and we'll be working on ways in which to increase our resources. We'll also continue to examine and revise the ways in which we allocate and use the money we have, and we'll ask members of the teaching faculty, selected by the Senate Committee on the Library, to work with us on the modeling and distribution processes.

But collection issues don't begin or end with allocating resources. We've reaffirmed our mission to collect materials that will be accessible to our users in future generations. Until we're assured that a particular format meets our criteria for perpetual access, or until we find good reason to change our mission, we won't cease collecting content in permanently accessible formats. As more and more smaller research libraries cancel their print subscriptions, those of us who don't are finding ourselves in an interesting position - in effect, we're becoming part of national and international print repository systems that we must develop carefully,

rather than letting them develop in spite of us. Over the coming years, we'll be working with other institutions like ours to develop organized systems of print repositories that ensure accessibility along with some redundancy; the system will require new funding -- from the government, from foundations and/or from users. Perhaps some of you remember the abortive proposal for a National Periodicals Center that was floated in the 1970's; we hope to be more successful this time. Watch for a white paper that will be issued by CLIR and CRL later this fall and watch for ideas that will base the structure of the system on the emerging computing grid systems.

This commitment to perpetual access doesn't mean that other formats aren't important. Workflows for selecting, acquiring, and making electronic resources accessible are being streamlined and improved this year as they're integrated with workflows for other materials. However, we must recognize that there are important differences between electronic and more "traditional" materials that will continue to influence our processes. Negotiating license agreements, for example, is a time-consuming and skill-intensive job that's difficult to routinize.

Repository ideas abound these days, it seems. As our faculty continue to produce large amounts of digital works - research, courseware, teaching notes, and the like - our institutions face the challenge of providing ways for them to store, organize, and make this material accessible perpetually. It's not at all clear that publishers are able or willing to meet even part of this challenge, or that we want them to, and so several universities are beginning to develop new models. MIT, for example, has just developed DSpace, an

institutional repository designed for MIT faculty. We'll be working with CITES this year to determine the feasibility of undertaking a similar effort here at UIUC.

Digital content and the use of information technology are clearly growing in importance. For more than a decade, our library has been distinguished for the contributions we've made to advancing knowledge about digital libraries serving specific user populations and to developing tools for operating and accessing digital content. But our own internal structure has been somewhat disorganized. A clear priority this year is improving coordination between and among our considerable information technology and digital library operations and endeavors. We must exploit existing technology and develop new technologies, wherever appropriate or needed, to enable Library faculty and staff to link users with the information they need and want, regardless of location, form, or format, and in the most effective way possible. To best fulfill this goal we must also continue to be at the national and international tables where information technologies, standards, best practices, and policies are developed and invest in innovative and even entrepreneurial ideas.

Money, or rather the lack of it, has come up repeatedly in my remarks. I would be remiss if I didn't include our upcoming capital campaign as one of our very high priorities this year. Although we're still in the quiet phase, we expect to go "loud" in about a year, with our top priorities being collections and preservation, facilities, and endowed positions. I want to make clear, however, that meeting our dollar goal doesn't mean that money will be

available to spend, at least not right away. Many of the gifts we receive will be deferred until the donors "mature," some of what we receive will be "gifts-in-kind," and much of what we receive, when we receive it, will be used to create endowments that will generate funds annually. I expect to be retired well before 2022 - 20 years from now -- but one of my dreams is that my successor then will have much more money to spend as a direct result of our work now, just as we now have the money to spend that our predecessors worked hard to raise.

We have some important internal challenges and priorities, too. How do we help each other, how do we build a more caring environment, as we strive to help our users? And how do we improve our services to our users? The results of an ongoing study in which a GA visits many units and asks pretty simple questions (when she can find someone to ask) do not convince me that we're doing everything we can to make our users feel welcome, let alone to provide them the guidance they need to use our resources. So, we'll need to work very hard on that - and right away.

Clearly, we must continue to be involved with the campus in a wide variety of venues, including work with CITES and the Cultural Engagement Council, collaborations with departments, schools, and colleges, and active participation in cross-campus initiatives. We must also strengthen our role in engaging the campus in issues that relate to scholarly communication, and find ways to develop and support alternative approaches to commercial publishing. Telling our story on campus, demonstrating our importance, in these venues and others, and emphasizing the integral role we play (using the

phrase "the jewel in the crown" goes only so far), is a critical set of strategies for garnering more resources in the future.

Similarly, our role in state, regional, national, and international venues continues to be very important. We are a land-grant institution with a strong mission of public engagement, and even if it weren't the right thing to do, which it is, participating in state and local organizations is very important. We must continue to engage with the public, not only through our library programs and services, but through presentations, workshops, partnerships, and other methods of transferring our knowledge to other groups, from school children to retirees. It's important to their future - and ours - that we continue to engage enthusiastically.

We are a major research library with much to contribute to the national and international communities. We already do a fine job and have strong bases from which to work; our challenge is to maintain this engagement and increase it where it will benefit UIUC and/or its library faculty or staff. The forthcoming report of the International Strategies Task Force will inform and guide our work in one aspect of this engagement. And we must be alert and aggressive in finding and taking our seats at the tables at which discussions and decisions that will fundamentally impact our future - and that of our users - are taking place.

In the thirty three years since I entered this profession I've witnessed profound changes. Changes in the ways in which research libraries carry out their roles and responsibilities. Changes in the expectations of library



users. Changes in society that keep us never-out-of-touch with anyone who wants to reach us, and make us expect and demand instant responses. Changes that have led to attacks on basic freedoms of access to information and privacy of reading, and to increased stress, more uncertainty, and ambiguity.

These profound changes have and will continue to influence where this library is going and which paths we'll take to get there. We must hold dear to our fundamental values to create the Library we want. Here's what I think is critically important for the Library's continued success. That

- everything we undertake has to be first class; it's what this university deserves;
- we are a library that cares passionately about its users and its employees, not just from the top down but throughout all levels;
- we continue to build and preserve strong collections and improve access to materials we do and don't own;
- we continue to offer a panoply of excellent services that keep pace with, indeed inch out in front of, our users' expectations and demands, and that we're willing to stop doing some things that have a long tradition but are of declining value to our users;

- we provide comfortable and appropriate facilities for our staff and users;
- we communicate clearly, effectively, and openly both internally and externally, responding promptly to requests and inquiries.
- we embrace the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and create an environment in which territorialism is not apparent, and in which time is taken to respect and understand others' points of view;
- we remain actively engaged with the campus and in local, state, regional, national, and international activities and organizations;
- we are a library that innovates and takes risks because, as someone recently told me, "a ship in the harbor is safe, but that is not what a ship is for, and that flexibility, agility, and willingness to change should be high on the list of our defining characteristics; and
- That we are a library that leads by example and engagement.

Our collective vision remains a compelling one. But, remember (and many of you have heard this before), visions without actions are just hallucinations. Visions without actions are just hallucinations. We're close to meeting some of this vision and not so close to meeting it all. I know that even with our

current challenges we can make good progress and hallucinate less. This library has a history of greatness and we're poised to enhance that greatness as we move through these challenging years of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. You're a great group of people; this is a great library in a great university. We have all the ingredients. We just have to keep working to mix them more harmoniously to achieve our own special greatness.

It has been an honor and a privilege to have spent the last three years here, and I look forward to sharing many more years with you.